

# Out Of SYZYGY

Turning to the persons sitting next to him at the table, the performer then trivialize one of your deeply rooted beliefs. Imagine some important experience of your life. Now imagine yourself experiencing it. Now please repeat the name of the experience.

...the watch to  
own several turns,  
to the time selected

re being randomly set,  
of paper, folds it, and  
er the table toward  
Take the folded paper  
ne, carefully placing it in my hand.  
folded paper for the moment."

The performance, "Share, please," notes the time of your future memory image you've created." She gives an imaginary event.

"And at what time will this occur sixteen," Sharon replies.

"Please open the paper," the per *leading periodical*  
 "and read aloud what is written." I  
 remarkable, future event occurring at about a quarter past seven!"

To force the time for this routine (how else?) you require a generic woman's wristwatch - one with a medium sized, round dial and a strap (rather than an expansion band or bracelet). In advance of the routine you must spot a woman wearing a similar watch who will be your first helper. After you show how to set the

***A collection of  
Lee Earle's  
contributions to  
Mentalism's  
leading periodical***

SYZYGY

THE JOURNAL OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
MENTALISM

Edited by: Lee Earle

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SYZYG

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## Foreword

It's often been said that the way to hide a great routine is to publish it in a periodical. According to that advice, the sixteen performance pieces in this book have been well and truly hidden - all were contributed over the years, under my own name, to the publication *SYZYGy - The Journal of Contemporary Mentalism*.

For those routines which remained in my personal repertoire the changes from the original writeups occurred naturally, evolving and growing as any routine does when performed regularly. After deciding to assemble that collection of material into one book, I revisited some of the original presentations and did some editorial tweaking.

One of the most noticable adjustments was the addition of color to the TopoLogo routine. Now the array of corporate logos

simply jumps from the page and it's yours to use - just run as many copies as you like on your color inkjet printer.

Additionally, many of the illustrations are now color enhanced as well.

One routine was rewritten entirely - *Clip Sheet*, now retitled *Taking Stock*. It's updated and super topical, with a couple of laugh-producing bits of business written in to put a lighter touch in your performances.

Keys Royale is the routine which changed the most, beginning with a great idea and developing into solid selection which is still one of my 'go to' presentations.

Mentalism Goes Postal is a routine which was first considered as a commercial release, it's that good. It may still be marketed as a stand-alone presentation one day.

I know you'll get as big a kick out of performing these routines as I have.

Lee Earle  
Phoenix - July, 2002

P.S. Might as well recycle another old idea...





# Taking Stock (was: Clip Sheet)

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The original concept as written for SYZYGY ages ago has been updated with a new premise, a very topical routine and, thanks to a telephone conversation with Larry Becker, a clever title too! Full size copies of the five stock certificates are included following the routine.

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“Today’s headlines are full of financial scandals and corporate bankruptcies,” begins the Mentalist. “Stock certificates which were once worth thousands are now going for pennies. It would take a psychic to know when to buy and sell these days. Someone like Martha Stewart.”

“One of my hobbies,” continues the performer, “is collecting old stock certificates. What once represented the capital to keep our economy humming is now, basically, wallpaper. Worldcom comes to mind.”

Bringing a small folio of the sort used to hold important documents into view, the mindreader opens it and withdraws several colorful replicas of stock certificates, saying, “The real thing, even if worthless as an investment, has value for collectors. So for this little demonstration, we’ll use copies. Here’s one for Atlantic Richfield, and another for Wisconsin Edison. This one, for the Clear Fork Oil Company was a winner in its day.”

Then the Mentalist pulls a handful of paper shreds from the folder, shrugs, and says, “Enron, of course,” and tosses it into the trash. Going ahead, he removes copies of certificates from Pan American World Airways and United Aircraft and remarks, “At one time, all of these companies were up and all were down. The million dollar question is one of timing, which is more a factor of public attitude than of value. Let’s test that premise.”

Handing a nearby participant the folio and five certificates, the performer instructs, “Mr. Auditor, you have been examining the accounts, market reports, and balance sheets of these companies and have decided that one of them is going bankrupt. It’s your choice - just write “BANKRUPT” on the face of the stock, then fold it several times so no one can identify it. While you’re at it, use a paper clip to hold it closed.” A box of paper clips is handed to the participant.

When the packet is clipped, the helper is instructed to drop it into one end of the folio and to fold and clip the remaining stocks, dropping them into the folio as well but separated from the ‘bankrupt’ stock at the other end of the folder.

“Now,” begins the Mentalist, “you are the only one who has any idea as to which investment is about to turn belly up. One by one, you’ll reach into the folio and bring out a folded stock certificate. You can bring out one of the ‘safe’ stocks or you can display the ‘Ken Lay’ special, as you wish. When you are showing one, it’s important for you to think, to yourself, either a positive thought, such as ‘This is a great investment’ or, for the



‘bankrupt’ stock, ‘Stay away from this turkey; you’ll get gobbled up’. It will be up to the rest of us to determine, from your nonverbal cues, which is the investment to avoid. Be sure to put on your best ‘poker face’ though.”

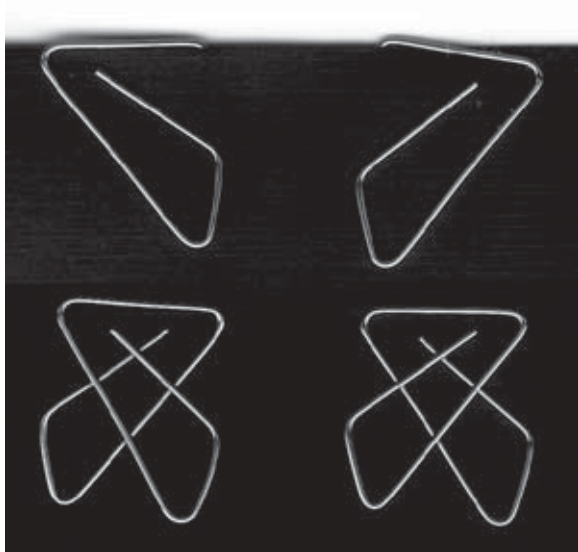
One by one the folded and clipped stocks are held up by the participant. The Mentalist has no problem ‘reading his body language’ when the ‘bankrupt’ stock is offered!

While straightening out my desk one day (take note: this is a rare occurrence!), I

sorted records, receipts, invoices and the like into separate piles, clipping the papers in each pile with those jumbo two-winged clips which are correctly called paper *clamps*.

When I was sliding one of the clamps onto a stack of papers, a burr on the clamp scratched at the upper sheet in the stack. Not wanting to discard a perfectly useful paper clamp, I unbent both legs and reversed their positions, which put the annoying burr on the outside of the clip, away from contact with the papers. Sort of like uncrossing your legs and recrossing them the other way.

Only after I slipped the clamp onto the papers did I discover this interesting anomaly. The re-bent clamp, when clipped to the papers, was a *mirror image* of its twins from the same



box, providing a visual clue which can be seen from across a room!

Since the paper clamp is the key, it’s important that your audience already be comfortable with them. Find ways to use the clamps earlier in your show so they are no longer remarkable. One of the best ways is if some of your prior props, papers, etc., have been clipped with them. Remove the clips and place them in your pocket.

Obviously, the first clip you supply to your participant to put on the folded ‘bankrupt’ stock certificate, is the re-bent one. I wouldn’t recommend getting too clever, though. For example, if the packet of stock certificates is held together with a single clamp when you show them, pull it off and place it in your pocket, but in the little small section intended for coins or matchbooks sewn into coat and trouser pockets. Later, when the ‘bankrupt’ stock is folded, you ‘remember’ the clamp in your pocket and hand it to your helper.

An alternative is to have 5 or 6 re-bent clamps on top of all the others in the box. After your helper selects one of them for the first ‘bankrupt’ stock, helpfully dump the contents into your open hand. This puts the re-bent clamps at the bottom of the pile so the remaining clamps taken will all be the normal ones.

If your performance allows for a little humor, try this: Link all the paper clamps together into one long chain, with a re-bent clap at each end and place the chain in the paper clamp box. Because you’re standing some distance away, when it’s time to offer a clip, dump the contents into your hand and trap one of the end clips under your thumb. Then toss the handful of clamps toward your participant. He’ll duck, expecting a shower of paper clamps and you can look pleased with your boyish humor. Naturally, the first clip he’ll take is the one on the end.

Final line: “The last time I spoke with my stockbroker he asked, ‘Do you want fries with that?’ “





CERTIFICATE FOR LESS THAN 100 SHARES

CERTIFICATE FOR LESS THAN 100 SHARES

NUMBER  
F097570

SHARES

CAPITAL STOCK

CAPITAL STOCK

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OF  
NEW YORK

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This Certifies that

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*Pan. American World. Airways, Inc. transferable in person or by duly authorized with every other certificate of this certificate properly endorsed. This certificate is issued subject to all the terms of the corporation's certificate of incorporation as amended and by laws as amended to which reference is hereby made with the same effect as if they were herein set forth in full and to all the provisions of which the holder of this certificate is not valid until countersigned by the officer of the corporation and the seal of the corporation and the signatures of its duly authorized officers.*

Dated SEP 19 1967  
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SECRETARY



*J. J. J. J.*  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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CROCKER-CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK,  
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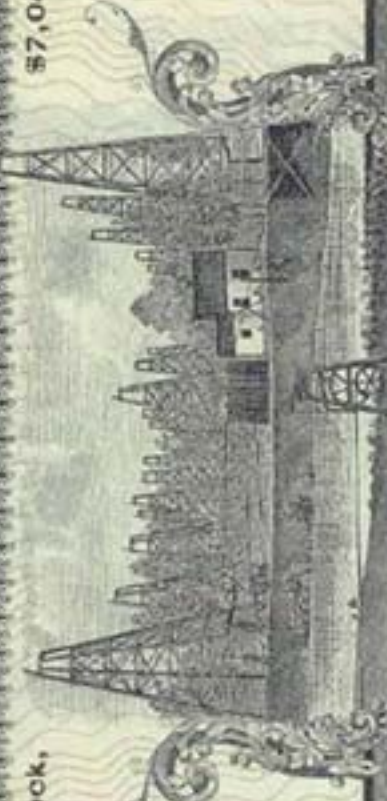
AUTHORIZED OFFICER



INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF OHIO.

Capital Stock,

\$7,040.00.



# The Clear Fork Oil Company,

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This Certifies that

R. F. Hutton & Co.

\*\*\*One Thousand\*\*\*

is the owner of  
*Shares of the Capital Stock of*

The Clear Fork Oil Company,

*transferable only on the books of the Corporation by the holder  
hereof in person or by Attorney upon surrender of this Certificate  
properly endorsed*

*In Witness Whereof, the said Corporation has caused this Certificate to be  
signed by its duly authorized officers and to be sealed with the Seal of the Corporation  
at Cadiz, Ohio, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A.D. 19\_\_*

President.



SHARES

\$10

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SHARES100  
SHARES

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(CONVERTIBLE INTO COMMON STOCK, SUBORDINATE AS  
TO DIVIDENDS AND ASSETS TO PREFERRED STOCK)

\$3.00 CUMULATIVE CONVERTIBLE PREFERENCE STOCK  
(CONVERTIBLE INTO COMMON STOCK, SUBORDINATE AS  
TO DIVIDENDS AND ASSETS TO PREFERRED STOCK)

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INCORPORATED IN ILLINOIS UNDER THE LAWS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

THIS CERTIFICATE IS TRANSFERABLE  
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CITY OF NEW YORK  
OR IN  
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FULLY PAID AND NON-ASSESSABLE SHARES, OF THE PAR VALUE OF \$1 EACH, OF THE \$3.00 CUMULATIVE CONVERTIBLE PREFERENCE STOCK OF THE ATLANTIC REFINING COMPANY.

transferable, on the face of the Corporation is personally duly authorized attorney when surrender of this certificate properly endorsed. These certificates and the shares represented hereby are issued and shall be held subject to all of the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, as amended, of the Corporation, in all respects which the holder by acceptance hereof assents. This certificate is not valid until countersigned by the Transfer Agent and registered by the Registrar.

Witness the facsimile seal of the Corporation and

the facsimile signatures of its duly authorized officers.

Dated: APR 18 1966

P. E. Cuddy

TREASURER

W. R. O. Carson

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

AUTHORIZED OFFICER

BY

COUNTERSIGNED:

THE CHASE MANHATTAN BANK  
(NATIONAL ASSOCIATION) TRANSFER AGENT.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

MORGAN GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY OF NEW YORK

BY



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0000



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53 1/2% SUBORDINATED DEBENTURE, DUE OCTOBER 1, 1991  
(CONVERTIBLE ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 1976)

United The The Corporation, incorporating duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware (hereinafter referred to as the "Company"), for and on behalf of the Company, to pay to

\*5000\* K 504A2 .CEUF &amp; CO

\*134349\*W01033\*

\*\*\*FIVE THOUSAND\*\*

CUST# 909296 AB 1

it required much of the principal work of

[illegible]

**Believe** America has the further progress it will achieve all sorts of the reverse result. But before anything else for all purposes let us start as things very well turn at this point.

[illegible]

DATE: SEP 15 1976

TRUSTEE'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICATION  
This is one of the *Debitnotes* deposited in the above-mentioned Indenture.  
**FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK.**

ATTENTION

20

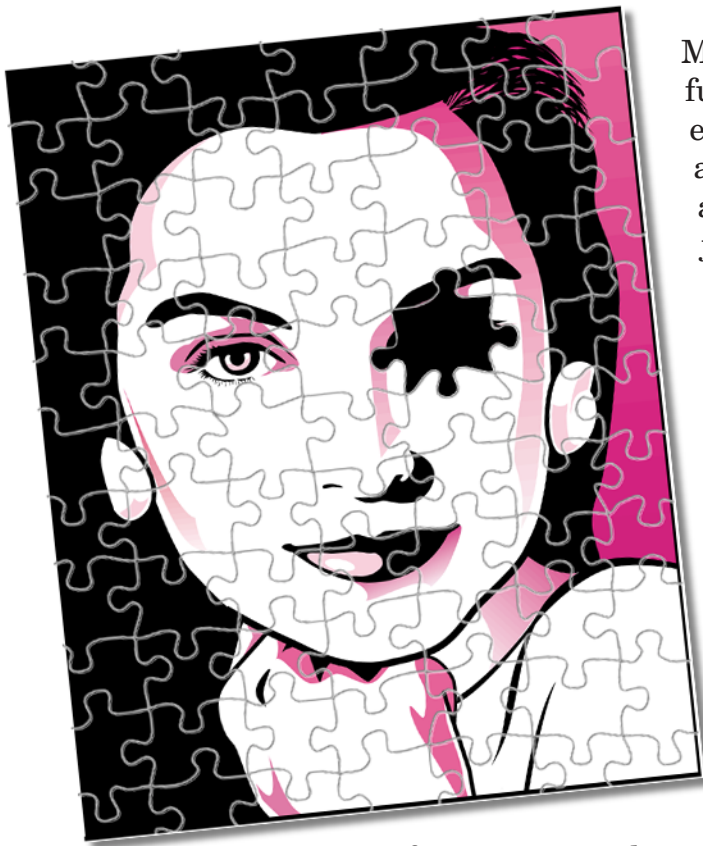
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# Puzzling Perception



“The intuitive process,” explains the Mentalist, “is one of the least understood functions of the human mind. Researchers explain that the brain gathers an abundance of seemingly unrelated data and then, much as one might work a jigsaw puzzle, attempts to fit bits and bytes of information together until they connect to produce a solution.”

Two identical jigsaw puzzles are produced; one of them is still pieces in a box while the other has been assembled into the completed picture and mounted on a panel. The performer pries one piece from the center of the completed puzzle and explains, “Sometimes one critical piece of the puzzle is required to make sense of the whole. In jigsaw puzzles the final piece is easy to locate – in real life that critical component is often more elusive.”

Opening the second puzzle box, the performer approaches several people in the front row and asks, “Please take a piece from the box and visually compare it to this one, taken from the center of the puzzle. As you’d expect, they are similar but not identical, yes?” The participants agree. All the pieces are returned to the box.

“There are only two pieces,” reminds the Mentalist looking at the puzzle’s description on the side of the box, “among these 100 which will complete the picture. One taken from the original puzzle and the other from this unassembled duplicate set.”

The mindreader shakes the box, mixing the pieces inside, then removes the lid and walks toward someone sitting in the front row, saying, “Reach into the box and take one piece. I’m sure you know, since the one you’re looking for came from the center of the puzzle, to avoid any pieces with straight sides. Use your fingertips, engage your intuition, activate your subconscious.”

That piece fits perfectly into the assembled puzzle!

This routine is quite clean because the only chicanery occurs right at the very start, even before the premise has been fully set. Please don’t ‘improve’ the handling with plastic bags, envelopes, or any other type of paraphernalia. It’s not necessary.

In your local ‘Everything’s-a-Dollar’ store buy 20 identical jigsaw puzzles. Once you’ve assembled them (this will take some time but gets easier with each puzzle), remove the same identical piece from all puzzles and place those pieces aside. Unlike the illustration, the piece *should not* contain an easily remembered graphic element.



Use spray adhesive to mount one completed puzzle, less the single removed piece *and two or three adjacent pieces*, to a section of black (to make the hole from which the piece will be removed more visible) matte board or a foamcore panel. After ensuring that there is no adhesive residue in the spot where the missing pieces go, lightly replace them, completing the puzzle. When it's time to take a puzzle piece, you can use your finger to 'thump' the back of the panel to loosen the three or four separate pieces, one of which is your dupe. Take that one and press the other loose pieces back into place. This sells the idea that almost any piece could have been used.

The 20 or so identical pieces are placed in one of the empty puzzle boxes along with 50 or 60 pieces taken from the *borders* of the unused puzzles; each of these border pieces will have at least one straight side. All the pieces are initially arranged face down.

Finally, choose from among the discarded random pieces one additional (non-border) piece at random which is similar in shape, color, and pattern to your duplicate pieces. Place this 'comparison' piece face up, among the other pieces in the box. Don't shake the box yet or you'll lose it.

In performance, when the single piece is removed from the assembled puzzle, reach into the box to get a piece to which you can compare it. Naturally, you'll pick the face-up piece, apparently after stirring the pieces before making your selection but actually to turn a few of the remaining pieces face up. Hold the two pieces up for the audience to see the printed sides, explaining, "It's easier to assemble the puzzle by comparing colors and patterns in the picture." Turn them so the unprinted side faces the audience and continue, "It's a real challenge to assemble the puzzle face down, when all you have to go on is pattern. That's why experienced puzzle solvers build the outside edges first and then work inward."

Toss the piece *from the assembled puzzle* back into the box. Because you've turned the pieces over showing colors and patterns, no one will know which is which and will assume you are returning the piece you just removed from the box. Hand the 'comparison' piece to another participant a few seats away, saying, "Here, compare it to any other piece; take one." Of course the piece he holds, one which everyone assumes came from the assembled puzzle, won't match any of those in the box. Ask him to hand "the piece" to someone else to compare in the same way. None of the pieces in the box will match the one the audience 'saw' you remove from the assembled puzzle.

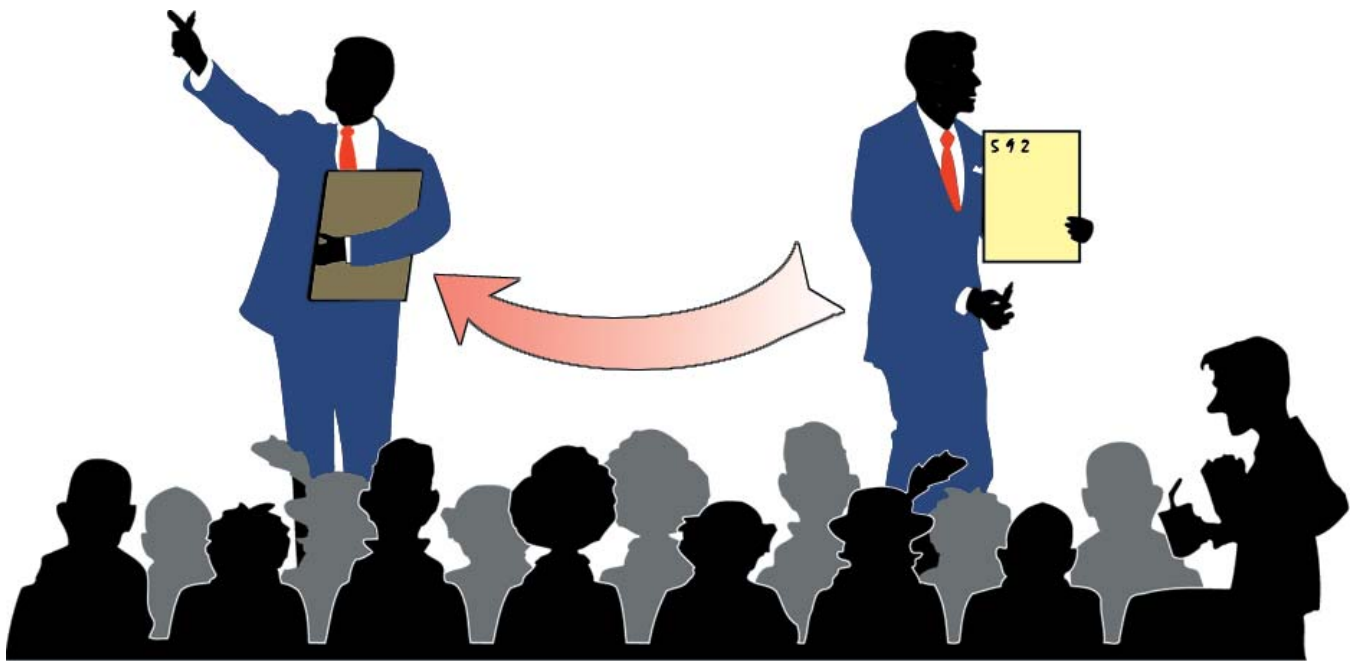
When your participant takes one piece, he knows to avoid those with straight edges and has a 20:1 chance of getting one of the duplicate pieces which will complete the assembled puzzle.

If, however, he manages to get the one 'comparison' piece, it obviously won't fit. You remark, "That's what happens when you trust chance or luck - the odds are against you. Now engage your intuition and try again."

He can't fail.



# Digital Kicker



The Mentalist uses a legal pad to record a series of 40 to 50 single digits called out by members of the audience. After gathering them, he offers an illustration of the mind's awesome capabilities by memorizing and recalling them in perfect order.

Two helpers are recruited from the audience. The first will hold the list on the legal pad and verify the accuracy as the performer vocally recalls the digits while the second writes those recited digits in even rows on a large flipchart sitting on an easel.

After taking a final look at the pad full of digits, the mindreader asks the person holding the pad to say "OK" or "Correct" each time a digit is recalled correctly.

Beginning slowly and building up to an astonishing speed, the Mentalist calls out all of the digits in perfect order!

Offering a follow-up demonstration, the performer asks the second participant to add the series of digits on the flipchart as a column of six-digit numbers and to enter the total at the bottom.

"While you are adding the numbers," reminds the mindreader, "I will be doing the same in my head. Let's see if I can do it mentally as quickly as you can on paper. I'll even give you an edge - you may use a calculator if you wish." If the participant requests, a large-button calculator is provided.

"Ready?" asks the Mentalist. "Then begin. The audience is invited to check your addition."

As the helper calculates, the mindreader turns aside and writes a seven digit number on the unseen side of a sheet of posterboard. When the participant has entered the sum of the figures at the bottom of the flipchart page, he reads aloud the total of the figures.

"Three million, two hundred fifty one thousand, and thirty three," he announces. Turning around his posterboard, the Mentalist smiles as the audience reads the figure there, 3,251,033; the exact same total!

A prememorized sequence substituted for the numbers called out by the audience. The audience is lulled into complacency using a sneaky psychological twist. You begin writing

their selections across the top of your pad in full view but slowly turn from left to right, as you solicit additional digits from different parts of the audience. By the time the sixth digit is accepted, from someone at the extreme stage right, you've naturally pivoted so the audience can no longer see what you're writing. The illustration shows the start and finish positions of the pivot.

Adjust your grip on the pad so the surface of the pad remains out of the audience's vision and continue requesting digits from individuals in the audience. As each digit is called out, substitute one of your own from your secret sequence (a combination of your telephone number, postal code, Social Security number, etc.). You'll need a memorized string which is 30 digits long.

Because the last few numbers usually remain in the audience's minds a while, finish by recording an additional three digits legitimately. *These are the only numbers you must really remember.*

Prepare your flipchart with spaces (light underlines) for only 42 digits so that the final three become 'throwaway' numbers after your initial memory feat. Your flipchart helper is told, "As I recite each digit, write it 'nice and large' in one of those pre-drawn spaces, filling up the first row, then the second row, etc. If there are more digits than spaces, just ignore the extras."

When the first participant shows you the pad so you can 'memorize' the collection of digits, just concentrate on the *first six* and repeat them silently to yourself for a few seconds until you can say them aloud to begin your 'memory' feat. Then recite your secret sequence, finish with the three 'throwaway' digits, and you're done.

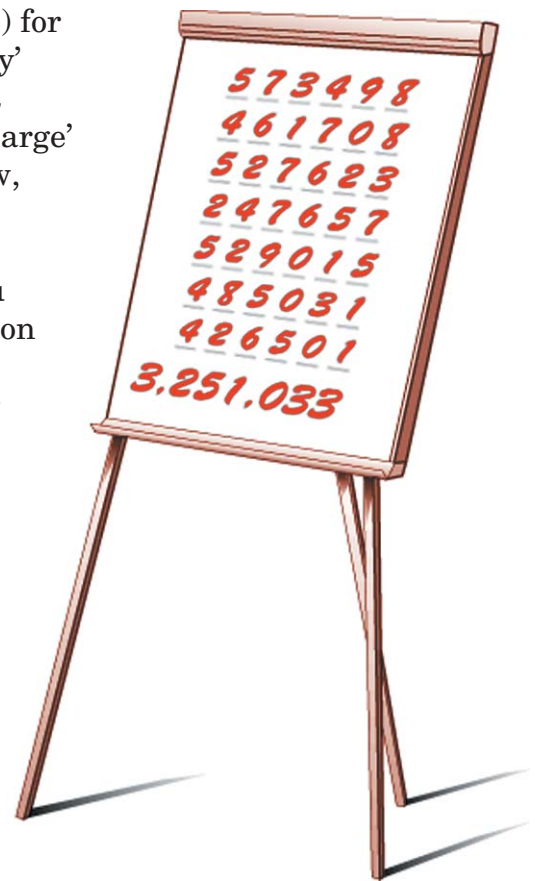
The flipchart not only allows for the audience to participate in the finale, *it also makes the second climax possible.*

As filled in by the second participant, the flip chart lists all the digits you called out (except for the final three for which there is no space on the page).

To sidestep doing six-digit math under pressure, *you can generate the same total every time by 'neutralizing' the first six genuine digits.* After you've written the last of your 30-digit secret sequence, *but before you ask for the three 'throwaway' digits*, get six more numbers from the audience. As you pretend to write them down, you really write the *nines compliments of the first six*. That is, you subtract each of the first six digits from nine, and write those results instead (in the example shown,  $9-5=4$ ,  $9-7=2$ , etc.).

The genuine digits (the first row) plus your 'neutralizing' digits (the seventh row) always add 999,999 to your secret string's sum.

Because the second helper is writing the numbers you call out on the visible flip chart, when it's time to 'remember' the neutralizing digits, just glance at the first six digits written and generate the neutralizing digits on the fly. They will go into the last six spaces, followed by the 'throwaway' digits which you really did remember. This also serves as a failsafe check - if your helper has missed writing a digit or written one twice,





your big finish will be a big flop. When a miswrite happens, simply finish the stunt as you call off the last three throwaway numbers.

For a sum of all the individual digits, just add all of your secret string of prememorized digits together, plus 54 ( $9+9+9+9+9+9$ ). Having precalculated that figure will allow you to give your helper the choice, "Do you want to add the numbers as a column of 6-digit numbers or would you rather just totalize all the individual digits?"

It's a good idea to avoid presenting this stunt as a 'prediction' - that sort of presentation invites reverse engineering which works against our interests.

Build your secret string of numbers out of number sequences you already have memorized - phone numbers, zip codes, etc., but steer clear of those which have repeat digits (which call attention to themselves). Likewise, you will say, when someone attempts to give you the same digit just offered previously, "Repeat digits are too easy - how about a different one?"

As you pretend to gather digits from the audience, engage everyone, from the front row to the standees at the rear. It puts the audience on notice that you intend to involve all of them.

Occasionally, ask someone to repeat when saying aloud a number for you; it's a subtle way of reinforcing that you are indeed writing the offered digits - else why would you be striving for accuracy? You can even mis-call the digit as you write and, after they correct you, 'erase' the entry and 'rewrite' it.

To speed up your digit gathering process, when you point to an area of the audience for your next digit and two people shout out numbers, say, "I'll use both - thank you." And then write down the next two (or even three) numbers in your secret sequence.

As you begin to recite the 'memorized' digits, point to the general area of the audience from which the numbers came. The first six are easy since you worked from your left to your right; the remaining 'points' are simply showmanship.

Remember to look triumphant at the finish - this stuff is supposed to be difficult and if you're too smug, they'll smell a rat.

Finally, be sure to acknowledge your two participant-helpers during the applause and thank them for their assistance.

# Go Weigh

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This presentation suggested itself when I was attending a rock & gem show with my wife. I'd never seen a pocket carat scale before and was immediately intrigued. Once again, the modus operandi is incredibly diabolic because it's indirect.

---



Psychics have claimed for years," informs the Mentalist, "the ability to use their minds to bend metal or fracture glass. But focused mind power often has another, almost imperceptible effect."

A small electronic scale (not much larger than a scientific calculator) is removed from its case, placed on the table, and switched on. The digital readout shows "0.00 grams."

The performer asks, "Would you please lend us several small items you may have in your possession, such as keys, coins, a comb, a pen or pencil, etc? Place them in a row here, in front of the scale."

The participant is handed a pencil and note pad.

"Weigh each item," instructs the Mentalist, "and make a notation of its weight, accurate to two decimal points." The helper does as instructed.

"Please note," continues the performer, "that I will never touch any of the items. Now that the exact weight of each item is known, please pick up any one of the items and close your fist around it."

The Mentalist holds his opened hands above and below the participant's fist, closes his eyes and whispers, "If we're successful, you may question your senses. I promise." His hands begin to shake, weaving and orbiting around the hand-hidden item.

Opening his eyes, the performer relaxes and says, "I've done all I can. Weigh the item again. You'll probably be surprised."

When the participant places the item on the scale once more, it is at least several grams lighter! The unselected items will, of course, still weigh the same as before.

Attached to the scale's leather carrying case, which is placed across the table from you, is a length of invisible thread. The thread is run across the scale's pan and over the table's edge, into your lap. To register a higher, bogus weight for an item, take the slack out of the thread and trap it between the table edge and your thumb. Lay a finger on the thread to draw down the scale's pan. Only one item is tampered with, ideally the second one, then pull the thread free to eliminate the gaff.

Select the target item via equivoque. "Pick up one item in your right hand...and close your fist around it." If it's not the one you want, finish that sentence, "...and one in your left hand..." If neither is the target, finish with, "...and place them both aside." Should the left hand now hold the one you want, say, "Feel one hand start to rise." When the left hand rises you remark, "That's the one which 'wants' to become lighter. Hold on to it tightly." A rising right hand gets, "...place that item back with the others."

In the case of your target object being among the three remaining, ask your participant, "Pick up the three items in one hand. Now take one item in your other hand. Good! Close your fist around it." When the target is not the one transferred, "Fine, place it with the other discards." Proceed as with two items, above.



## Poor Man's Room Service

"It's a sad world," laments the Mentalist, "in which security concerns have become paramount in the hospitality trade. Thieves have been known to stay at a hotel, keep the room key, and then return at a later date to loot the same room while the current occupant is attending a conference session or enjoying the poolside buffet. When people forget to return their room keys, the locks must be rekeyed as a precaution. That's expensive!"

The performer goes on, "Lately, hotels have begun using electronic locks with keys like these." He shows a flat, credit card sized piece of plastic in the pocket of a small paper folder.

The Mentalist explains, "This key fits a computerized door lock. It is encoded to open your room's door only and operates just for the duration of your stay; after you check out, it will no longer function in the lock. In some hotels, if you persist in your attempt to use an expired key, you may find a brawny member of the hotel security staff tapping your shoulder."

"Neither specific hotel name," reminds the performer, "nor room number are printed on the card; another frustration for a would-be pickpocket. If an active card-key is stolen, the thief won't know which hotel it accesses, much less the room number. Instead, there is a space here on the folder where the reception clerk writes your room number by hand. Guests are advised to memorize the room number and carry only the card-key."

Smiling sheepishly, the Mentalist admits, "Of course if you have less than a perfect memory (or one too many adult beverages) that practice is problematic. It's not wise to walk down the hotel corridor in the early morning, repeatedly inserting one's key-card until a door lock flashes its green light. Surely, there's an easier way to recall the room number, perhaps through intuition or clairvoyance."

Addressing three persons in the audience, the performer asks, "Would each of you give me a single digit please? Just allow the numbers to appear on a hotel door in your imagination." The numbers given are 3, 8, and 1. "I'll write that room number right here in the space provided on the folder."

Returning the pen to his pocket, the Mentalist brings out a mechanical crayon marker and says, "I also carry one of these china markers. It's about the only thing which will not permanently deface the plastic. I use it to write the room number on the back of the card in bold black digits which I can see without my glasses. What was your guess at room number again? Three-five-seven?"

He withdraws the key-card from the folder and turns it over. On the back, next to the brown magnetic stripe, are the digits 357!

A piece of *pencil carbon* paper is taped inside the folder so you can transfer the digits to the key-card by *writing with your thumbnail* as you show the folder's printed side to the audience. Alternatively, a listo lead Swami Gimmick will do the trick.



# Future's Window

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When booked to entertain a group at a full-service hotel, consider this no-gimmick prediction method. It couldn't be simpler.

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The performer asks a representative of the client company to join him on stage. The spokesman brings along a sealed envelope and confirms that the envelope was postmarked several weeks prior and has been in his possession since he received it in the mail.

He opens the envelope, removes the contents, and reads the letter aloud. The page bears a written prophecy of the day's events, headlines, etc., whatever the mentalist cares to take credit for predicting. No other props are involved.

The solution is simple. It requires only the unknowing assistance of the hotel staff. When mail arrives for a guest, a message light is illuminated on the telephone in his room and the letter is held at the front desk until he claims it. Often the letter will be stamped by a front desk clerk to document arrival time and date.

Use a window envelope and prepare two identical letters. One of the letters is addressed to the client in care of the hotel, the other is addressed in the same manner to you. Highlight your name and arrival date to be sure it's not missed by the hotel staff. Each letter is blank below the addressee. Fold both and insert them in the envelope so you are the addressee visible in the window.

When you seal the envelope, use a dab of moisture from a cotton swab at two or three spots on the gummed flap. Make sure that the attach points are about one-eighth of an inch from the flap's edge. When you peel open the envelope later, the edge of the flap will remain crisp and unturned. Attach a stamp and mail the envelope.



Because you are a seasoned professional, your arrival at the out-of-town hotel is set for a day in advance of the performance in order to avoid the potential disaster of a travel delay. The letter will be waiting for you at the front desk. If there are several

additional pieces of mail in your bundle (send at least three, with different style envelopes), the prediction envelope will become one of many and will thus be less conspicuous to a hotel clerk.

Early the following day, after you scan the morning edition for useful prediction events and headlines, carefully peel open the envelope and withdraw both letters. On the one addressed to your client, write your prediction, refold it so the address will show through the window, slip it into the envelope and reseal the flap. Make a trip to the front desk and drop off the envelope with the night clerk, saying, "This was mixed in with my mail."

Check with your client before showtime to ensure that he received the letter you 'sent'. The front desk clerks will assume it arrived in the mail, and so will your client.



# Aura-Matic

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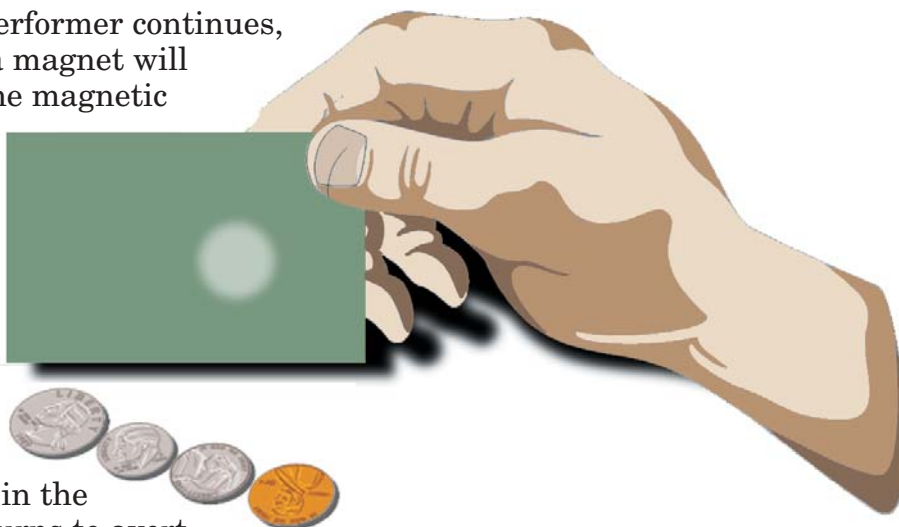
When this material first hit the market, performers seemed to be focused on actually having someone hold the stuff itself to do the work. One of the reasons I like this piece is that its use of the gimmick is tangential - offbeat - and therefore more difficult to reverse engineer.

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“Within each of us,” begins the Mentalist, “is a life-force which radiates outward, broadcasting our essence which can be interpreted by those trained to observe it.”

The performer places 4 coins in a group on the table and covers them with one of his business cards.

Instructing further, the performer continues, “Just as a needle rubbed on a magnet will absorb and then re-radiate the magnetic field, likewise your personal aura can be transferred, simply through concentration. When I have turned around, take one of the coins from its hiding place and hold it in your closed hand, directly in front of your pineal eye.” He illustrates by placing his fist in the center of his forehead, then turns to avert his vision.



“Mystics claim that your aura is the strongest in this position. As you hold the coin in this position, imagine your essential energy attaching itself to that object. Can you visualize it? Please place the coin back on the table beneath its concealing cover.”

Turning around to face the participant once again, the Mentalist studies his helper to “examine” his aura, perhaps delivering some good cold-reading lines. “I think I have a good idea of how to identify your energy field. Now let’s see if there are any similar auras emanating from the coins.”

The performer uncovers the group of coins and pockets the business card, then briefly concentrates on each coin, glancing from the coin to the participant and back as if comparing something. Taking the participant’s index finger, he moves it slowly over the bunch of coins, until he lowers it onto one coin. Of course, it is the target coin.

The method is disarmingly close to the premise. But there is a logical disconnect involved. It’s not the aura which transfers to the coin, but body heat instead. The rear surface of the business card is treated with a thermally sensitive coating which changes color with a shift in temperature. The coin which was held in his hand will be somewhat warmer than the others and will leave a distinct circular impression on the sensitized side of the card.

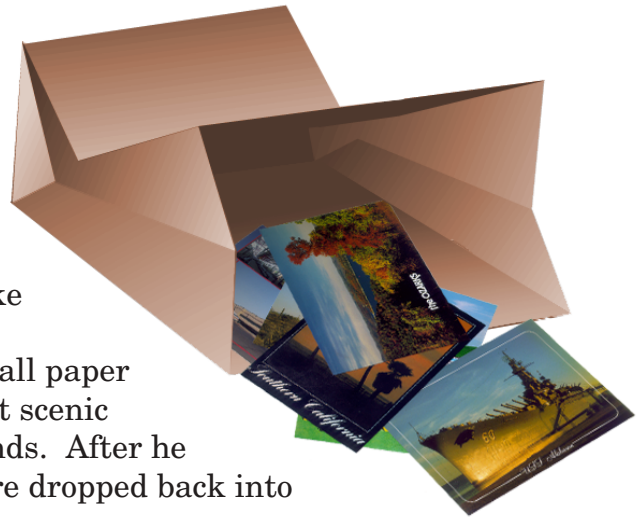
When you lift the card to view the coins, a glance tells you what you need to know.

The card stock I found is called “Touch-It” and can be purchased from Kelly Paper stores for about \$12.00 for 50 sheets of 10 point card stock. Similar materials can almost certainly be obtained from your local printers supply store.

# Mentalism Goes Postal

“These days,” begins the Mentalist, “I always purchase postcards wherever I travel. When I return and review my postcard collection, it’s almost as if I am standing in those exotic locations again. Perhaps some people in this audience would like to take a virtual vacation tonight.”

The performer empties the contents of a small paper sack, more than four dozen completely different scenic postcards, into a participant’s outstretched hands. After he gives them a thorough shuffle, the postcards are dropped back into the paper sack.



Averting his gaze, the mindreader asks four people to reach into the sack for a blind selection of postcards. The first removes a random number of postcards and places them out of sight in his pocket. Next, the sack is passed to three persons who take out a single postcard each and concentrate on the scenes they depict.

Without asking a single question, the Mentalist announces the number of postcards the first person is holding. “Just for fun,” suggests the performer, “leave one postcard unseen in your pocket when you remove the remainder and count them to verify my perception.” It’s perfect, of course.

Directing his comments to the three participants holding a single postcard each, the mindreader directs, “Take an ‘out of body’ trip to the scenes depicted on the postcards you hold. Place yourselves in those very places; feel the textures, hear the sounds, smell the aromas.” Then he goes on to describe details from the postcards - colors, shapes, objects, etc. - which are in their minds.

Finally, the Mentalist makes a sketch on the paper sack, and asks to see the postcard hidden all this time in person #1’s pocket; the drawing matches the postcard perfectly!

There is a secret stack of sixteen postcards inside the ungimmicked bag. The paper sack is of the type which has a flat, rectangular bottom which is just larger than the dimensions of a postcard - 4.25 x 5.75 inches (10.5 x 14.6 cm). If necessary, select a slightly smaller sack and trim the postcards to fit.

The sixteen postcards are actually two sets of eight. Lets say the postcards are pictures of landmarks in Honolulu, San Francisco, Phoenix, San Antonio, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, and Washington. I use these cities because I can easily visualize them in west-to-east geographical sequence. (You can use a similar arrangement from Europe, such as Dublin, London, Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, Geneva, Berlin, and Moscow.)

The second set of cards has photos of the same locales, perhaps taken from another angle or even of another subject entirely. So the Honolulu pair might be a picture of the Diamondhead volcano and a wide angle photo with Wakiki beach in the foreground showing the famous mountain in the background. The St. Louis set would be the Gateway Arch and a shot of a Mississippi riverboat tied up at the wharf in St. Louis.

Half of the pairs must have another feature in common. Perhaps they are night scenes, or maybe they all have water in some form (fountain, river, lake, or pond) which is not present on any of the other postcards. These are always the first three and the



seventh cities in your geographical sequence. In this example, all the photographs of Honolulu, San Francisco, Phoenix, and New York are nighttime, sunset, or twilight scenes, shown here (zoom in if you can - they're quite detailed):



Arrange the first eight postcards (all closeups of landmarks in a *horizontal* or *landscape* format) in the above listed geographical order. You will note that they are also in night, night, night, day, day, day, night, day sequence. The second set, all with a *vertical* or *portrait* format, are stacked in the same city and night/day order. The face card of the assembled stack is the vertical shot of Washington and the back postcard is a nighttime horizontal view of Honolulu.

It is essential that you are completely familiar with the details on each postcard - these are the little things you'll reveal during your performance.

Make a false bottom for the sack by cutting the bottom panel from a duplicate sack and gluing it to the picture side of another postcard *which is slightly wider than all the others*. Start with an oversize postcard and trim it, or just dummy one up on your computer.

The stack of postcards is placed in the bag, picture side up, with the false bottom gimmick on top of them. The remaining 40 or 50 assorted postcards are dropped on top of everything. When you empty the bag, grip the bottom of the bag with your thumb along one long bottom edge and your fingers on the opposite bottom edge. This allows you to press inward to retain the stack and wide-card gimmick in the sack as the remaining postcards tumble out. You can 'flash' the inside of the bag to the audience because of the sack bottom glued to the wide postcard, but don't be obnoxious about it.

After the indifferent postcards are shuffled and returned to the bag, you demonstrate how each person is to reach into the bag, *take the top postcard*, and conceal the picture from everyone. What you actually do inside the bag is to turn over the entire batch of postcards, putting your stack on top, picture sides down. Slide the gimmick (false bottom) postcard out of the stack and withdraw it from the sack as you demonstrate for the participants how to conceal the pictures by placing the card flat against your chest.

Mention to the first participant that it would be a good idea to take out a random number of postcards to make things more interesting. "Grab several," you say, "at least 3 or 4, as many as a dozen or so - just to make things interesting. Quickly tuck them into your jacket pocket like this." That's when you ditch the gimmick postcard in *your* inside jacket pocket in illustration.

Ask the three people holding single postcards to concentrate on the depicted scenes. "I get a strong sense of a nighttime vista," you comment. "If you are focusing on a photo taken during or after twilight, please close your eyes and concentrate on that image in



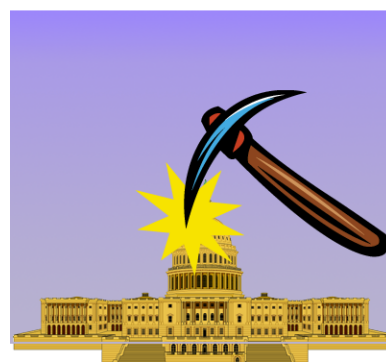
your mind's eye." That's when you turn and see whose eyes are closed and secretly perform a little addition. The first cardholder has a value of one, the second person's value is two, and the third participant's value is four. Add the values for the persons with the closed eyes to get your first key.

You already know that your three participants are holding postcards which are in a west to east order from helper #1 to #3. If you can learn the location depicted on of any one of the postcards, you will immediately know the other two.

To help you, the locations are numbered, however *they are not numbered in the same west to east order.*

The locations are numbered zero through seven. Each number's rhyme is associated in a weird and wacky way with one of the locales: *One* is a *gun*, blasting a huge hole in a Phoenix, Arizona cactus; *two* is a *shoe*, balanced atop Chicago's skyline; *three* is a *tree*, blocking traffic on San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge; *four* is a *door*, opening into the St. Louis Arch; *five* is a *hive*, held by New York's Statue of Liberty as bees circle angrily; *six* is a *pick*, plunged into the Capitol in Washington, DC; *seven* is *heaven*, represented by a Honolulu hula dancer with angel's wings and a halo; and *zero* is a *hero*, guarding the Alamo, shrine of the Texas Republic.

For example, assume the first and second persons have closed eyes. Add their values ( $1 + 2 = 3$ ; three is a tree - growing on the





bridge in San Francisco), thus the first person's card (card #1) is San Francisco. In *geographical sequence*, the second person's card is Phoenix, AZ and the third person's card is San Antonio, TX. You'll reveal this information, and details on those postcards, later.

This is when you share your first 'perception', the number of postcards taken in the first batch. If card #1 is being held in a *horizontal* position (this is a very subtle cue - people always turn photos upright to view them), you know it's from the first set of eight postcards, therefore, the initial participant has fewer than eight postcards in his pocket. Count the postcards in geographical sequence (in your mind, of course) until you reach what you know is the card held by participant #1 (in this example, Honolulu, San Francisco, Phoenix, and the first card held is San Antonio, so three postcards are in the person's pocket). Should card #1 be a *vertical* scene, there are *at least* eight postcards hidden, *plus* the number in your *geographical* sequence before card #1. If person #1 is holding a horizontal San Antonio postcard, eleven postcards would in the pocket (eight vertical cards and the number of cards in the second sequence of eight ahead of the first calculated postcard, San Antonio).

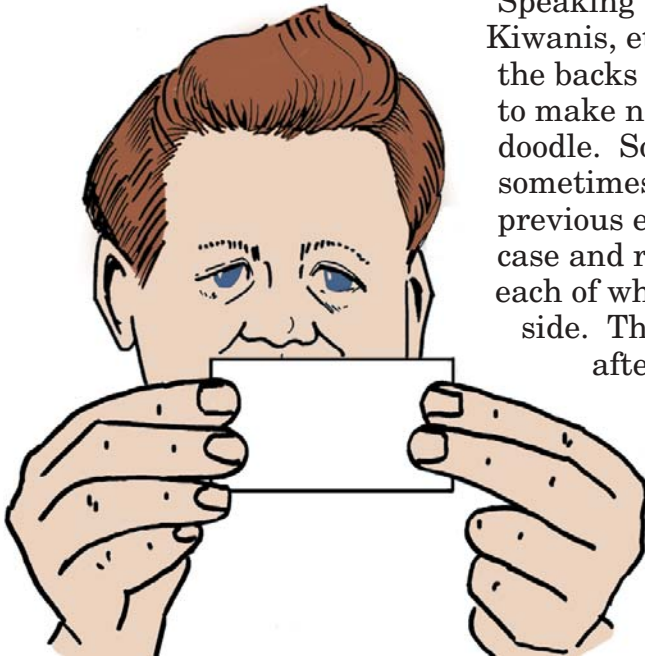
Ask the participant to leave one postcard hidden in his pocket while removing and counting the remainder in verification. To determine the hidden card's scene, simply observe the cards as your participant counts them. It's easy to see which city is not in the geographical sequence. Just don't stare. After all, at this point, you're merely interested in the count. Besides, as far as the audience is concerned, the postcards were mixed earlier, remember?

Turn your attention back to the three single postcard holders and describe, from your memory of the cards in your stack, small details in the scenes they are viewing. Keep your descriptions general, as if you were slowly perceiving just little snippets of the three persons' thoughts. Save the full description for the final card.

The final, hidden postcard becomes the target for an amazing feat of image duplication. Here is where you take a marking pen to the side of the sack and duplicate the hidden postcard's photo in as much detail as you care.

For additional impact, have the participant reproduce his postcard's scene by drawing it on a blackboard, dry erase panel, overhead projector transparency as you simultaneously draw the scene from your memory on your board, panel, or transparency.

## Duplicitous Business



Speaking to a service club group (such as Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, etc.), the Mentalist asks, "Almost everyone uses the backs of their business cards as a convenient place to make notes, write new telephone numbers, or just doodle. Sometimes the information is important, sometimes it's trivial. I have several examples from previous encounters." He opens a vinyl business card case and removes a selection of others' business cards, each of which has a word or doodle written on the blank side. The last card is one of his own which he retains

after replacing all the others in the case and placing it on the table. He explains, "With a couple more of your business cards, I'll show you something interesting about those inscribed thoughts. The cards should have blank backs, like this one of mine."

From among those offered, the performer takes two of them, adding his own to them. The mindreader reads aloud the name

on the top card, and asks that person to write, on the blank side of his business card, any word which comes to mind. The card is slid, writing side down, beneath the case on the table.

This procedure is repeated with a second participant, who is asked to make a sketch or doodle on his business card. That card is placed directly beneath the first card, on the table.

The Mentalist starts openly sketching or doodling on the back of the third business card, his own, and after reading the name on the printed side of the one of the borrowed cards, says, "Stereotypes are often based in fact. This gentleman's card announces that he is a realtor. He's likely think of something like 'downspout'. Let's see." His card is turned over to show the word, "drainpipe".

"This person is an attorney," continues the Mentalist, reading the printed side of the second card, "Are you a labor relations lawyer? The impression I get from you is the word, 'strike'." The card is turned over to reveal a sketch of a bowling ball!

Cut a blank-on-both-sides business card from white card stock. Place it against the blank side of one of your own business cards and the pair is at the bottom of the collection of 'samples' in your case. After showing some of the other words and drawings, you retain both your business card and the double blank beneath it, shown and held as one, and return all the others to the case.

One final requirement is a small pellet of soft wax. As your audience offers you their cards, select two of them which are printed on similar white stock. Memorize the name on one of them while using the wax to covertly stick them back to back, making an instant double-faced card, with the memorized name face down.

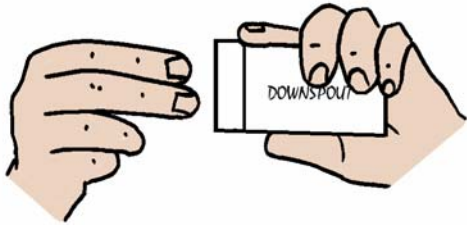
'Mix' the cards to arrange them in this order, top to bottom: the improvised double-facer on top, the double blank in the middle, and your regular business card on the bottom.

Read aloud the name which is on the top face of the double face card. Hand that person a pen and while he's taking off the cap you apparently turn his card blank side up.



Actually, you do a double push-off, turning over the top double facer and your double blank as one card.

Hold the packet with the fingertips of each hand at the ends of the cards, with your double-blank facing the participant. Ask him to print, in block letters, any word which comes to mind.



Turn the packet to the horizontal so his writing is facing down and then perform a *glide move* (see worm's eye view, left) in which you appear to draw the bottom card off the packet but really remove the double-facer, second card from the bottom. Slide it under your card case, on the table, so it is mostly hidden. This also keeps the audience from noticing that it's a double.

All will assume that his writing is on the underside of that 'card'.

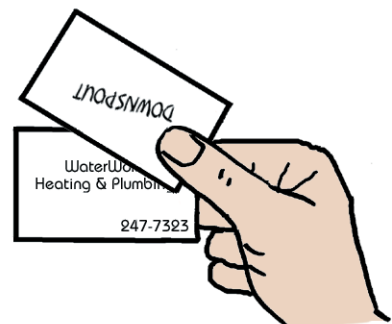
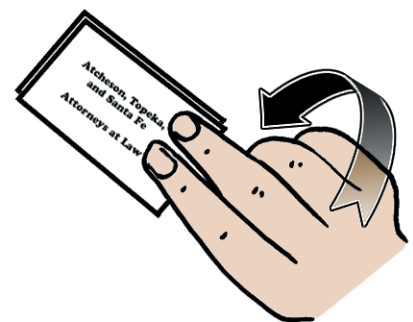
Rotate the packet of cards so that the word just written faces directly toward you. Thumb the card off into your right hand with the blank side toward the audience. Your own business card remains in your left hand. Pretend to read aloud the name you memorized earlier as you glimpse the first participant's word. Now forget the memorized name and instead remember the word facing you on the double-blank card. Place it back onto your own card, still in your left hand and hold the packet as before while the person named writes or draws on 'his' card.

When he's through, transfer your card to his side of the pair and turn the pair of cards so your card is on top, hiding what he just wrote. In one flowing motion, use the pair of cards as a scoop to slide beneath the tabled double facer picking up all three cards, as you move the card case aside. Spread the three just enough to withdraw your own card from between the other two being careful not to reveal the writing on the bottom card. Toss your card blank side up onto the table and begin making your own doodles on it as you gaze at the printing on the upper of the two cards. You will reveal a word which is similar to the word you just glimpsed.

To verify your success after you've written or drawn your 'impression', pick up both cards at one end, fingers on top, thumb beneath. Rotate your wrist and spread the cards. You probably recognize the venerable two-card monte move.

Drop the double facer to the table and hold up the double-blank, word side toward the audience, allowing the audience to see it. That's when you view the drawing, the one they think is on the underside of the tabled card. Slide the double-blank beneath the double-facer on the table which puts the cards in position to repeat the procedure, to reveal the drawing.

Gather all three (actually four, if you count the improvised double-facer as two) cards and slip them into your business card case, adding to your 'collection'.



# Korano Blanco



Asked to picture a playing card,” begins the Mentalist, “it is probable that you would think of either the Ace of Spades or the Queen of Hearts. If you’re requested to think of a piece of furniture, more often than not a chair would be your first mental image. Likewise, when queried for a vegetable most people answer, ‘Carrot’ and for a flower, ‘Rose’ is the common reply.”

Picking up a dust-jacketed hard cover novel, the performer continues, “Even when we make every attempt to assure randomness, our minds tend to work more similarly than differently. I’ll show you.”

The Mentalist hands the volume to a nearby member of the audience and asks, “Do you read comfortably in English? Fine. Open the book to a few pages and satisfy yourself each provides a large selection of words.”

“By the way,” continues the performer, “about how many words are on a page? Two hundred, you say? And how many pages in the book? Three hundred and sixty? So how many words is that, all together? About seventy thousand or so, yes?”

Going on, the Mentalist suggests, “Then certainly you can page through and select a random word. Hopefully one which will present a challenge. Have you found one yet? Good!”

The performer places a Post-It note pad sheet on the dust jacket saying, “Please print the word in block letters, as well as the page number. You’ll see why in a moment.” Given a ball-

point pen, the participant writes his word and the page number on the yellow square of paper.

The performer retrieves the book and holds it with the Post-It paper facing the floor, “I need the book but don’t want to see what you’ve written, so take this.” Slipping the dust jacket from the book, the performer hands it, still note side down, to the helper, while retaining the book.

The Mentalist reminds, “Remember what I told you about how subconscious influences defeat our attempts to act at random? I’ll show you what I mean. From what page did you select your word?” The participant answers and the performer turns to that page and shows it to the audience, saying, “Several hundred words - a great many choices. You didn’t change your mind before you selected your final word, did you? I thought so.”

“Then,” continues the mindreader, pointing to a spot on the page, “you probably rejected this one and decided to use ‘amazing’ instead. What’s your ‘random’ word?”

“Amazing!”

Obtain a hard cover book which has a smooth, dark surface. A light colored dust jacket is helpful - it must be white on the inside. With a container of aerosol underarm antiperspirant which lists Aluminum Chlorhydroxide as an ingredient, spray the inside front cover of the dust jacket to give it a white coating of the antiperspirant.

The coating will transfer just like carbon paper to the dark cover of the book. On a smooth cover, it wipes off with a thumb stroke. You can coat the cover with a clear acrylic spray to ensure the white impression wipes away cleanly.



# Brain Book

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Tony Kent, an awesome performer out of New Mexico, planted the seed for this routine in a telephone conversation one day. It has grown from an offhand remark into one of the most powerful pieces imaginable.

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In the middle of pulling words from participants' minds during a word test presentation, the Mentalist requests of his audience, "If you're not already ahead of me on this, each person here should bring a single, hard-to-spell word into mental focus."

Stopping in front of one participant, the Mindreader asks, "You have a tough word in mind, don't you?" "Yes," is the reply.

"Take this," instructs the performer, handing a paperback dictionary to that person, "and look up your word. Raise your hand when you've found it and I'll get back to you." He continues his earlier presentation until he notes the new helper's hand is raised.

Walking back to the participant with the dictionary, he questions, "Did you check the spelling?" She answers, "Yes."

"Who else," asks the Mentalist, retrieving the book, "is thinking of a problematic word?" Several persons raise their hands and the dictionary is tossed to one of them with the command, "Look it up." He turns back to his first helper.

"I couldn't help but notice that you opened the dictionary near the middle," states the performer. Likely, the word you have in mind begins with an 'M' or an 'N'. That's a substantial hint."

Pausing for a moment, as if calculating in his head, the Mentalist then says, "Then you're probably thinking of 'mischievous', right?" The participant answers, "Yes!"

Without looking in the direction of the person now holding the dictionary, the performer says, "Close the book to eliminate page position as a clue but remember the page number first. Do you have it? What's the word?" "Skeptical," declares the book holder.

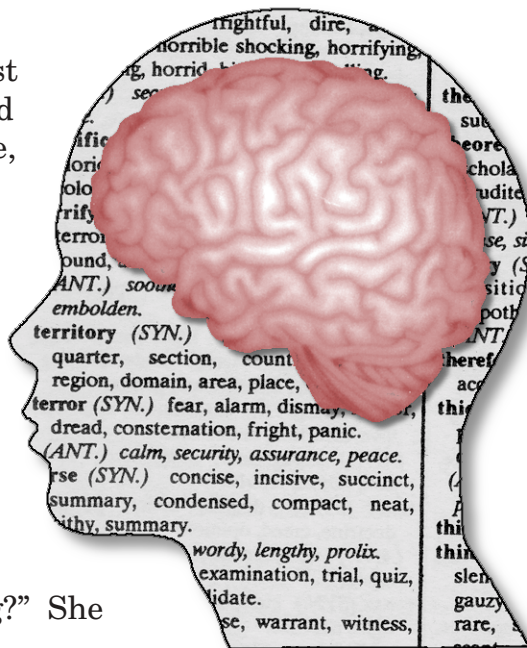
"Well, you won't be much longer," insists the Mentalist. "That word is between 'skeptic' and 'skepticism' on page 318, correct?" "Absolutely," confirms the participant.

"One more," informs the performer, "Who else wants to try?" A hand is raised and the dictionary is tossed to that person.

"This time, just *think* of your word," the mindreader asks, pausing as if in concentration. "Whisper it to the person sitting next to you – then go to page 117." The participant flips through the pages and stops as directed.

"You'll find your mentally selected word in the left column, directly below 'cafetorium'," reveals the performer. "You're thinking of 'caffeine'." "Absolutely," confirms the helper.

How? Buy several copies of a current Reader's Digest magazine and remove the same



page from each one, "It Pays to Increase Your Word Power". These pages are exactly the right size for use on an impression clipboard. You may also use the page illustrated here - just make several copies and trim them to size. Direct each helper to select from a different column. Before the show, approach several attendees, asking each to mark the word which, among those listed, is the most difficult to spell. Then he or she is directed to

### Table III - Difficult Spelling Words

abbreviate	congratulate	hindrance	perceive
accelerator	conscientious	humorous	personnel
accessible	courteous	hypocrisy	pharmaceutical
accumulate	criticism	idiosyncrasy	phenomenon
acquaintance	deceive	incidentally	picnicking
admissible	defendant	indictment	plagiarize
advantageous	desirable	indispensable	plausible
afterward	dependent	innuendo	pneumonia
allotment	desperate	inundate	poisonous
ambience	dilemma	interfered	posthumous
analyze	discernible	irrelevant	potatoes
ancillary	disastrous	irrevocable	predominant
anonymous	discrepancy	itinerary	prerequisite
apparatus	dissatisfied	jeopardize	privilege
appearance	earnest	leisure	precede
arrangement	embarrass	liaison	procedure
assistance	employee	likelihood	programmed
athlete	epitomize	loneliness	prominent
attendance	erratic	maintenance	pronunciation
authoritative	erroneous	maneuver	propitious
auxiliary	essence	mediocre	quantitative
believable	excerpt	mileage	rapport
beneficiary	exhibition	miniature	rarefy
benevolent	exhilarate	mischievous	recommend
bookkeeper	exorbitant	misspell	remembrance
caffeine	facetious	movable	reprieve
calendar	feasibility	necessary	rescind
cemetery	February	negligible	rhythm
changeable	fictitious	ninety	salable
characteristic	foreign	noticeable	satellite
clientele	forfeit	occasion	seize
collateral	freight	omitted	separate
commitment	gaiety	overrun	silhouette
committee	gauge	pamphlet	simultaneous
competence	grievous	parallel	simplify
concede	guarantee	paraphernalia	skeptical
conceivable	harass	pastime	(Continued...)

take the page and memorize the correct spelling for possible use in the show later.

Ask the first helper to circle the word, the second one to underline his choice, the third to draw a box around it, and the fourth to draw an 'X' through the word. When you access your clipboard's secret copy, compare the placement of the marks to learn which participant is thinking of which word.

Select persons wearing brightly colored clothing or with easily recognizable features so you can quickly spot them in the audience later.

Memorize the associated info (page numbers, location, etc.) from the small, paperback dictionary you will use during the show.



# L.E.X.I.Con Revisited

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This routine and the one which follows (Opus Conversam) both use a variation of the same page force, using some sort of bookmark switch. Aside from that similarity, they appear as completely different routines. This one allows the audience to be the mind readers!

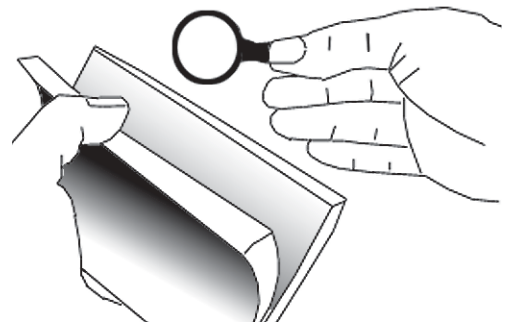
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“When scientists explore the sixth sense,” remarks the Mentalist holding court at a social gathering, “they always use randomly selected ‘targets’ to avoid any possibility of outside influence. Colors, shapes, and words have been found to offer the best chances for success. Let’s explore.”

He walks to the host’s bookshelf and removes one volume, saying, “This book has several hundred pages and hundreds of thousands of words. Surely one of these randomly selected would serve as an excellent baseline to test our ‘psi’ abilities.”

Holding a toy magnifying glass (such as one might find in a Cracker Jack box) at his fingertips, the performer turns to a nearby participant and instructs, “You may need this, soon. As I riffle through the pages of this book, please stop me at any page.”

As the pages flip past the helper says “Stop” and the mindreader legitimately halts at the selected spot. Then he openly drops the magnifying glass between the pages, closes the book, and hands it to the participant saying, “Step to one side, open the book at the magnifier, and look for the longest word in the top line of either page. Make sure it’s a word you can both pronounce and spell.”



When the participant indicates he has one and only one word in mind, the Mentalist withdraws a pack of alphabet cards (available from toy stores or educational outlets), shuffles the deck, and hands a portion to several members of the audience, keeping a small packet for himself. He says, “Each of you holding alphabet cards will look through them as our first helper concentrates on the letters in his target word. You will remove the letter card of your choice and hold it on your extended hand, face down.” The performer demonstrates and then goes on, “Don’t show anyone the letter you’ve selected—we wouldn’t want to influence the other participants.”

Once all the helpers’ hands are extended, the performer gathers the selected letter cards and asks the on-stage participant, “How many letters are in your word?” “Six,” replies the helper.

“I rather expected a longer word,” remarks the Mentalist turning the gathered cards face up and spreading them to view their faces and counting eight of them. “I’ll discard a couple.” He removes two from the group and places them aside.

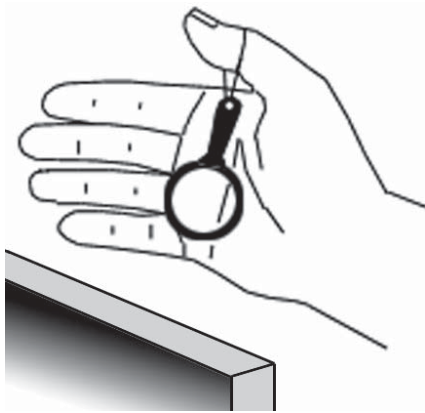
Next, the performer shows the remaining chosen letter cards in sequence to the initial helper, asking with each one, “Is this letter in your word?” For all but one, the answer is “Yes.”

The single card which elicited a “No” is exchanged for one of the earlier discarded pair. The mindreader asks, “How about this one?” “Yes!” is the reply.

“Tell everyone, please,” asks the performer, “the word you were spelling in your mind.”  
“Louver,” is the response.

The Mentalist turns over the selected letter cards one by one. They spell L-O-U-V-E-R!

You will need two of the small novelty magnifying glasses which are the thickness of a half-dollar coin. Before you perform, remove a paperback book from your host’s library and find a blank page (usually a chapter heading) or one which has only an illustration on it.



Look at the top line of the facing page for the longest word. With luck it will be six or seven letters long. Place one magnifier between the pages near the spine and return the book to the shelf.

During your performance, you will casually remove that book to force the word. Hold it firmly near the spine to prevent the magnifying glass from falling out.

Your second magnifier is gimmicked with a loop of “invisible” thread attached. When you legitimately stop at the spot suggested by your helper, just drop the it into the book (the loop of thread stays around your thumb) and close the book. Before you hand him the book, transfer it to your other hand and secretly withdraw the

looped magnifier behind your hand. Voila!

Because you instruct your helper to go to the top line of either page, everyone believes the participant is in control of the word selection when, in fact, he has no choice due to the one blank page.

Your deck of alphabet cards is contains a thick, key card made by gluing two cards face to face (use Z and Q).

Assuming your force word is “LOUVER”, pull those cards, as well as two random others, from the pack. Place the double back card on top of the face down eight letter cards and put the balance of the alphabet pack face down on top of these.

When it is time to hand out cards to eight participants in the audience, give each person 4 or 5 cards until all those above the double backer have been distributed. You’ll use the remaining cards (your stack) to illustrate what you wish your audience helpers to do. Mix your cards and have your participants do likewise. Now fan the cards, faces towards you, and select one (the double backer) and remove it from the group without showing it’s face (you can’t, really). Ask your helpers to remove from their packets the one letter which each believes could be in the stage participant’s word. These cards are held on their outstretched palms, face down.

Replace the double backer on top of your face down stack and then collect each helper’s *unselected* cards, placing all of them face down on top of the growing packet in your hand. When you have collected all of the unused packets, you will have about 45 alphabet cards in your hand, with the stack of force cards at the bottom and the thick key card between the stack and the rest of the deck.

Double undercut the stack and key card to the top, retaining a break below the stack. Go to the first person and pick up his card with your thumb at one end and fingers at the other while keeping it face down and place it upon the second person’s card. Pick up both and deposit them on number three’s letter, and so on until all eight of the selected cards are on the last helper’s outstretched hand.

Pick up the eight cards in your right hand, thumb at the rear and fingers at the front,



and bring them near the top of the deck of cards in your left hand. Ask your initial participant to tell you how many letters are in the word in his mind (as if you didn't know...). His reply provides all the misdirection you require. In one motion, place the cards in your right hand on top of the deck and turn over *all* the cards above the break, placing them back atop the deck. Raise the deck as you thumb the top eight cards off. The audience will see only the backs of the cards. When all eight are in your right hand, lower the deck allowing the audience to see the double backer now on top of the pack. You can count the cards aloud as you thumb them off and then remark that you have two too many.

Place aside one of the indifferent cards and one of the correct letter cards. Continue as in the routine's description.

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Here is the beautiful subtlety: Because you have never shown one of the discarded letters, each person who chooses a letter and subsequently does not see it in the spelled finale, assumes *his letter* was the one letter discarded!

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Another fun twist I throw into this routine is the use of an anagram. Whenever possible, I try to find *another word* which can be made up with the same six letters. In this example, the letters spelling "VELOUR" can also be rearranged to spell "LOUVER". After the participant confirms all the letters are correct, I arrange them into the anagram order and triumphantly announce, "And the word on your mind is LOUVER, yes?"

Of course, he'll reply, "Nope."

Usually someone in the audience, especially if it's a casual drawing room type of group, will mention something about it being spelled with the same letters.

I love it when the audience does the work.

Stage performance note: When doing this routine from the platform I don't use the magnifying glass switch. Instead, I use a large paperback dictionary and a riffle force. Usually I'll glue the force page to the one behind it to make a double thick page which makes the riffle force very easy. Holding the book by the spine in one hand and riffling the pages with the other, I ask the participant to stop me at any page. I time my riffling so that I stop at the double thick page at the moment (or slightly after) when my helper says, "Stop."

For those of you who have the Silver Bullet, it's a simple matter to put the 'work' onto the force page in advance. Then pick up the book, do 'the move' to get your break, and riffle force to the break.

Why not just second set black? Or water. Why binary?

## Opus Conversam

The Mentalist, holding a hardback book in its dust jacket, walks into the audience and asks a participant to stand. He has chosen someone wearing eyeglasses so there will be no doubt that he is equipped to read text on the pages.

“Some words,” the mind reader states, “have a much higher subjective content than others. Those ‘semantically loaded’ words affect our emotions with far more impact than the rest of the text in which they are found.”

Opening the book at a previously inserted bookmark, the performer reads aloud a steamy passage, and then remarks, “If you are like most people, your imagination gave extra weight to words like ‘tingling’, ‘squirmed’, and ‘clutching’.”

The performer holds the book above eye level and slowly riffles the book’s pages, requesting that the helper place the bookmark between any two passing pages.

“Here,” the Mentalist offers, easing the book out of its dust jacket, “Hold on to the book for a moment while I get something to write on. Please remain standing.” He hands the book to the participant and returns to the stage, reading aloud some of the literary reviews printed on the back of the dust jacket.

After picking up a drawing pad and jumbo felt pen, the mind reader gestures in the direction of the standing participant and asks, “Will you now open the book to your randomly selected pages, please? Place your finger on the top line of either page. Read that line to yourself. Imagine that you are in the scene or conversation being described. I’m not getting a strong thought; now silently read the next line. Nothing yet – go to the next line. Still boring; go down one line further. A weak impulse there, too. Down one more line, please. Is there a strong, lusty, sensational word in that line?” The participant says, “Yes.”

The Mentalist nods, “I thought as much. Focus on that word only. See it in your mind.” Then he writes a word on his pad but doesn’t show it to the audience. “Is the word ‘breathless’?”

“No,” says the helper.

“That’s odd,” says the performer, “What word *are* you picturing?”

The participant says, “quivering.”

The sketch pad is turned around to show, printed in large block capital letters, the word “QUIVERING.”

You can find dozens of romance novels at bargain prices on the remainder table of your local bookstore. That makes it possible to give the books away after each performance – a great logical disconnect.

Locate, near the center of the book, a blank page facing a page full of text. On the text page, read down several lines until you find one with a single long or exotic word. That will be your force word. Remember which line it is on (i.e. the 7th line) so, in performance, you can coach your participant to that same line.

Locate another memorable, sensual word (the one you will initially mention) on one of





the first few lines. Remember it, also.

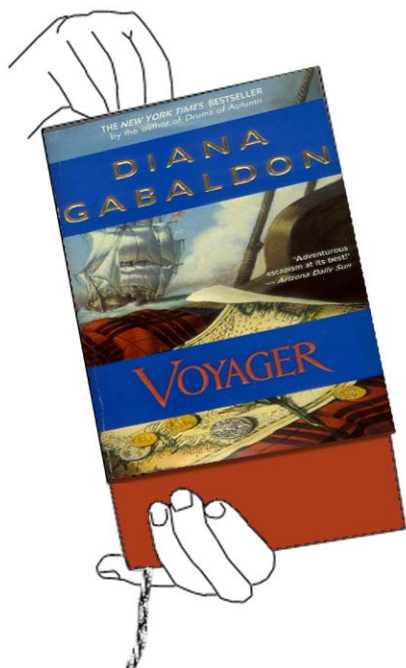
You will need two identical bookmarks, each with a satin cord attached through a hole in the top corner. One bookmark has a short, steamy passage of text printed on it. It's that text you recite when you apparently read from the book. This step is crucial – it subconsciously 'sells' everything as normal. If you're using a plastic laminated bookmark such as those available at almost every bookstore's counter, cover one side with clear, matte finish tape to provide a surface upon which you can write the text.

The ungaffed bookmark goes between your force pages; push it flush with the end of the book, its hole next to the book's spine.

Fold the dust jacket, *upside down*, around the book, fitting the flaps in place as you normally would. Tuck the cord from the concealed bookmark between the spine of the book and the dust jacket. Hand pressure holds it there as you perform.

Place your text-bearing duplicate bookmark in the opposite end of the book so when you open it to 'read' the text, the dust jacket and bookmark are right side up; the book itself is upside down. Thus, when you 'read' the passage (really from your bookmark) the audience is subconsciously 'sold' on the fact that everything is as it should be.

In performance (after you're through 'reading') give your participant the bookmark to insert into the pages as you riffle. Keep everything above eye level so no one can see the reversed book or the second bookmark. Close the book on the bookmark.



Hold the book by the spine and cup your other hand at the bottom of the spine, momentarily supporting the book & dust jacket and concealing the hidden bookmark's satin cord (*1st illustration*). Tip the book so the visible satin bookmark cord runs along the top end of the book, between the covers. Push the bookmark almost flush with the top of the pages and loosen your grip just enough to allow the book to slide out of the dust jacket about an inch.

With your free hand, pinch and hold the top bookmark's cord tightly against the inside of the dust jacket. Lower your supporting hand, sliding the book free of the jacket (*2nd illustration*); the gaffed bookmark remains concealed inside the dust jacket. A well-timed pivot, orienting yourself for a return to the stage, supplies cover for the move. Tug on the dangling cord to ease the bookmark into view, then hand the book over your shoulder to your helper.

Return to the stage while reading aloud the literary reviews and comments from the dust jacket. (Find some with clever, pithy comments or write your own.) Place the dust jacket, with its hidden bookmark, aside as you take pen and pad to hand. Finish as described.

Your miscall of the word is insurance against someone getting frisky. When you state the wrong word, there is no longer any incentive to make you fail, so you're more likely to get an honest reply.

Tape your contact information on the bookmark which the participant gets to keep or, better yet, make up your own using some of the photo and page layout software available for most desktop computers.

# The X-Cards

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I'm more comfortable with a "super sensitivity" premise rather than the original "out of body experience" justification in the original SYZYGY version. It's much more believable, as you'll see.

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"Certain 'psychic' abilities" begins the Mentalist, "have received a lot of press lately. Among the most interesting are those which are purported to be normal senses, amplified. Would you like to see if you have a heightened physical sense?"

After a participant volunteers, he is requested to supply one of his credit cards (or a frequent flyer card, prepaid phone card, or rental car discount card). He's reminded to remove it from his wallet, face down so no one can see the numbers on the card. The mindreader takes the card and slides it openly and honestly into an opaque manila coin envelope, folds over the flap, and places it on the table. Then he does the same with one of his credit cards, saying, "You may already know the numbers on your card, so you'll have a chance to try it with mine." Next, he shuffles both envelopes until no one knows which one contains either card and asks, "Which envelope shall we try?"



When one is indicated, the performer runs his index finger lightly across its face and informs, "This one is yours. Hold on to it for a moment."

"I suppose you are curious how I knew that? It's that amplified sense of touch I mentioned. Here," smiles the performer, holding the other envelope which he claims contains his own card, "run your finger over the surface of the card. There are embossed numbers on the credit card inside. Can you feel them? Sometimes it helps to close your eyes and imagine seeing with your fingertips. What's the first number?"

"Seven," replies the participant.

"Nope. Perhaps your strengths lie in other areas. The leading number on major credit cards – 3, 4, 5, or 6 – denotes American Express, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover, respectively," replies the performer. He pulls open the envelope's flap, pulls the card out into view, and says, "See - my Amex card's first four number group begins with a 3." He slides his card back into the envelope, folds over the flap, and says, "Place your envelope back on the table and I'll try it with your card's numbers."

The Mentalist moves his extended fingers over the surface of the envelope, then takes out a pen and starts making sketchy lines on his card's envelope. "I feel a shorter series of numbers than normal. This isn't a credit or debit card after all, is it? And the color doesn't 'feel' right, either. More of a silvery color. White lettering in this corner. It's well worn so it's received plenty of use. Hard to feel all the numbers."

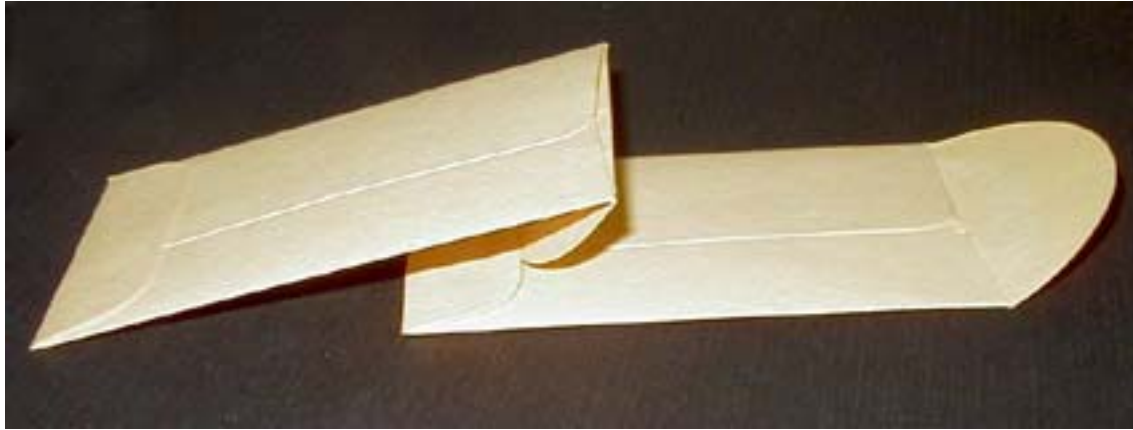
Finishing his sketching on his envelope, the performer admits, "Well, I'm not sure of all the numbers; I think I got most of them, though. Let's see."

The envelopes are torn open and the cards are placed on the table. The envelope upon which the Mentalist was sketching is placed next to the participant's credit card showing



an uncannily accurate representation of the details on the card!

A rubber-banded stack of opaque coin envelopes, their flaps all extended, is held seam-side-up. The *second envelope from the top* contains one of your old credit cards; a spot of adhesive or wax holds it in place. Insert your fingernail beneath the top edge of the sealed



bottom flap and lift the edge (without creasing it). The top, empty, envelope envelope has its flap folded back onto its face.

When the

second envelope is pulled from the stack, that little lifted bottom flap will engage the backfolded flap on the top envelope to pull it into a normal, extended position.

Raise the stack of envelopes in your hand so the bottom of the stack is slightly toward the participant and the opening side is toward you. Take your participant's face down credit card and insert it into the top (flap folded back) envelope. Pull the second envelope out of the stack by its flap, rotating your hand holding the stack of envelopes to hide your 'second deal'. Fold the flap to close the envelope and place it on the table, flapside down.

Openly slide your own credit card *with its back toward the participant* into the new top envelope, *above* the participant's card already inside. Pull it from the stack and place it on the table next to the first envelope using exactly the same motions.

After the mixing, if he happens to point to your envelope (you'll know which is which - one of them has a double card inside), just touch it lightly say, "This one is mine - here, hold onto yours..." and continue as above.

After your participant's attempt at sensing the number on the card in your envelope, pull open the flap and, after squeezing opposite sides and ends to align the cards perfectly together, reach in with your fingertips and pull the pair of cards into view. Because they are aligned, his card will be perfectly hidden behind yours. Hold the card(s) by diagonally opposite corners showing the face of yours as you explain the numbering system. The numbers and design on *his* card stare in your face! Memorize all that you can.

Put the card(s) back in the envelope and refold the flap. Focus on "his" card in the envelope he holds. Describe what you remember from your glimpse. Scribble and make notes on the envelope containing your card(s).

The cleanup is simple. Hold both envelopes together and tear off the flaps so you can dump out the contents. It's assumed that each card comes from a different envelope. Your extra card stays hidden inside its envelope, to be recovered later.

You can put a small bead of wax or the office adhesive "Blu-Tack" on the back of your credit card so squeezing them together once will keep them perfectly aligned. When they drop into view, place your envelope (the one on which you made your sketches and notes) in the center of the table to misdirect as you spread the cards to break the stickum connection.

# Keys Royale

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Sometimes it takes a few performances for a good routine to evolve into a great one. The original iteration of this presentation used an awkward pocket 'lock index' - workable, but clumsy. Once I was performing this routine on a regular basis, its method and performance quickly streamlined.

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"Intuition is defined as the ability to make accurate decisions with limited information," declares the Mentalist as he approaches an audience member and empties several keys and a small luggage lock into his hand from a faceted, stemmed glass. "This 'gut feeling' often provides the narrow margin necessary for success or survival, and is easily demonstrated. We'll use a number of keys but only one of them opens the lock. You, sir, are now the official tester. Please try each key in the lock. Please let me know when you find the working key."

The Mentalist continues speaking to the audience, explaining intuition, as the keys are tested. He 'notices' that the helper looks a little frustrated and reaches into his pocket to bring out a long keychain from which he removes a seventh key. "Did none of the keys open the lock? Try this one. Unlike my brother-in-law, it works. Good. Close the lock and drop it into the glass. Toss in all the keys, too. Thank you."

Continuing, the performer states, "The reason keys function as they do is because each one is cut to a different pattern. Only the key which exactly matches the lock's pattern will turn; one which is a few thousandths of an inch in variance may look nearly identical but will not function. You had it in your hand; did you make note of the pattern? No? Of course you did, or at least your subconscious mind did. Now let's put that subconscious to work. Please stand here with me, so the entire group can see."

The performer empties lock and keys into his outstretched hand. "Take one key. Show it to your brain. Now go with your gut feeling. If you feel that it is not the proper key, put it back and take another. You may exchange as many times as you wish. When you sense you have the right one, say so."

Once the participant is satisfied that his choice process is complete, he is asked to insert the key into the lock - but not to turn the key yet! "Your odds of random success are 1 in 7," declares the Mentalist. "But when you follow your sixth sense, your intuition, you cannot fail. Turn that key - and never doubt your intuition again." Success!

The first six keys are identical and will open a duplicate lock which is in your pocket. That lock is secretly introduced in a variant of the 'shuttle pass'. Use a heavily faceted, stemmed glass and conceal a strong magnet (mine was salvaged from a small audio speaker) in the hand which holds the glass. It attracts the lock's steel hasp and retains the lock inside the glass (much like a "Chop Cup"), hidden by cupped fingers and the reflections from the cut glass facets. Be sure to select a lock which has non-magnetic brass keys so they won't be attracted to the magnet. Dump the keys from the glass onto the



duplicate lock hidden in your hand. Let your helper take the lock and his choice of key, after which you drop the leftover keys back into the glass to conceal the first lock.

If he happens to take the single key which will only open the first lock (which is still magnetically hanging in the glass), say, "Place it here. One down, five to go. Continue to eliminate keys until only one is left." When one key and the lock remain, drop them in his empty hand to clear yours for the 'eliminated' keys. As he inserts the last key in the lock and all eyes and attention are on him (as you warn him not to turn the key yet), deposit the keys on top of the held-out lock in the glass and set the whole works aside.

Finish as above.

There are several reasons this routine plays well. The lock, something with which almost everyone is familiar, is a metaphor for a challenge; a closed mind; denied access. When it snaps open, your audience is instantly aware of the success.

Bear in mind that it's your participant who enjoys that success. He's the hero who harnessed his intuition. You are merely the catalyst.

Having the keys tested to "find the one which opens the lock" is psychologically better than saying "none of these keys opens the lock - go ahead, check me." It serves our purposes to ensure the audience is aware that only one key in seven will open the lock but we shouldn't fall into the trap of 'proving' none of the others function. That's the action and mindset of a magician whom the audience has learned to distrust. You see, magicians have to prove they're *not cheating* whereas a Mentalist is not hampered by the same assumption.

Instead, asking the participant to "find the key which works" serves the same purpose but without the 'impending challenge' factor. Moreover, having been told that one of the keys will work, the participant will try all six keys more than once.

Theatrically, the period during which the keys are being tested is "dead time". When I perform this piece, I fill that time with a true story illustrating the use of intuition:

"Police officers have long been aware of the 'Blue Sense', otherwise known as intuition. Sheriff Ralph Ogden of Yuma County, Arizona was walking through a shopping mall parking lot when, for no reason other than a 'hunch', he used his portable radio to inquire about the license plate of a car he saw parked there. When the dispatcher returned with word that the registration was that of a stolen car, Sheriff Ogden was astounded (and the thief was arrested). Later, trying to puzzle out what had caused that hunch, he realized that his intuition had seen something which his conscious mind had missed; the car's rear licence plate was covered with squashed bugs! Either that car had been driven in reverse *really fast*, or it was *the front license plate from another car*. Had the Sheriff not learned to trust his 'Blue Sense', the bad guy might have escaped."

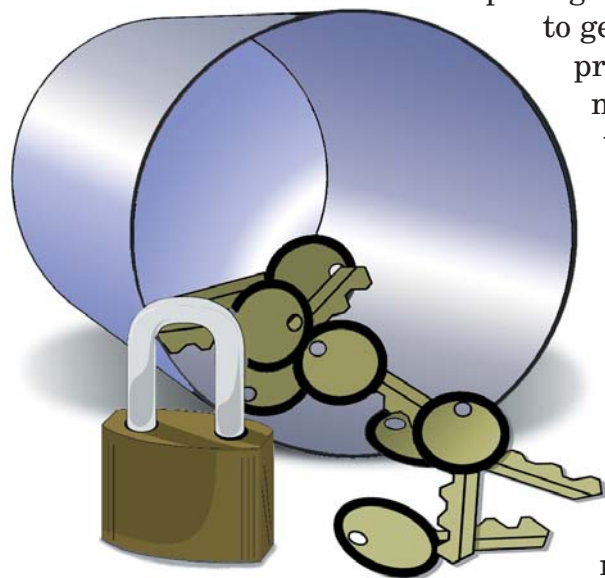
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A few years ago I was booked to lecture at the Scottish Association of Magical Societies in Dunoon, Scotland. What I didn't know until I arrived is that I was also expected to perform in the Saturday evening Gala Show. And me without an act! True, I had my faceted glass and luggage locks, but they were not terribly visible or impressive for a large auditorium audience. I needed larger props. The following variation was devised 'on the fly' during a Saturday afternoon stroll.

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Padlocks which are easily visible to a large audience aren't easily concealed in one's hand or hidden in a stemmed glass. A different switch is called for. After purchasing two sizable and identical padlocks I had about a dozen extra keys made for one of them. These are the keys with which the first participant tries unsuccessfully to open the other, first lock.

Instead of a faceted and stemmed glass, I opted for a small pail. A 'Big Gulp' large soft drink cup will serve nicely, too. As the non-working keys (those which fit the second, hidden lock) are tried, offer the container for disposal of the keys. As your participant is opening the lock with the final, working key, shake the pail



to get one of the keys up under your fingers in preparation for the Miser's Dream coin bucket move. Take the last key from him, which he found to open the lock, and pretend to drop it in the container, dropping the held-out key instead, which falls to the bottom of the container and makes the right kind of noise. This eliminates the only key which will not open the second, hidden lock. Offer the pail as a receptacle for the lock and, after it's dropped inside, ask your helper to stand up so the audience can more easily see.

Grasp the container by the rim with your free hand, thumb outside, fingers inside. By now, you will have secretly fished the hidden lock out of your pocket and have it concealed in your other hand. Reach into the container and take the lock in the pail in your fingertips. As your hand withdraws from the pail, slip that lock under the fingers of the hand holding the container. In a smooth continuation of the movement, pull your hand completely into view, now visibly holding the lock which the audience will assume is the same one so recently tested. Give the lock, apparently just removed from the container, to your helper.

Now, you can tip all of the keys out of the container into your open hand and remark, "You may use any one of these keys - let your subconscious mind decide." When he makes his selection, drop your handful of keys back into the container, releasing the lock to fall among the keys, and set the container aside.

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The above handling works well for a medium size padlock but not for the overgrown monsters which were the only ones available in Dunoon that day. You'll be delighted at how I resolved the problem.

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Keep the final lock in your shirt pocket, under your jacket. Also in your shirt pocket is a necklace length keychain (I used my old dog tag chain from when I was in the service) upon which is strung the key which will open the first lock. As you return the keychain to your shirt pocket, pull the lock from your shirt pocket and drop it into your coat sleeve at the armpit. Any extra fumbling which occurs is explained by the difficulty you have convincing the length of chain to go back into your shirt pocket. Be sure to keep your wrist above waist level to avoid unpleasant surprises. When it's time for the switch, the

audience can see your plainly empty hand reach down into the container. The sleeved lock will drop into your hand, so cup your fingers to catch it. Proceed to switch locks as described earlier.

Have your helper cup his hands to receive all the keys as you pour them out of the bucket. Let the empty bucket (with the first lock inside, concealed by your fingers) hang at your side.

Ask your participant to spread all the keys out on the palm of one hand. As you 'count' the keys, spot the one key which will not open the lock he holds. Your helper is instructed to "take one key". If he happens to take the single key which will only open the first lock, say, "Good, eliminate another one. Continue until you're holding one, final key." Should he choose one of the working keys, take all the remaining ones and toss them into the bucket which covers the noise as you release the lock. Place the bucket aside and you're ready for your big finish.

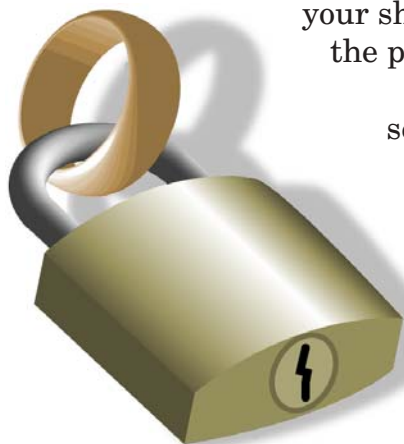
Don't rush when you sleeve the lock or, later, when you do the lock switch. It's very clean and unsuspecting.

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After reading one of Billy McComb's routine for linking finger rings, I decided to borrow his Modus Operandi to add one more twist to my presentation.

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This new variation allows the participant's finger ring to be secured on the lock's shackle, eliminating from consideration any possibility that the lock might be switched. If you're working with luggage locks, the switch lock is open in your trouser pocket. Should you wish to use the larger, down-the-sleeve lock, place the open lock in your shirt breast pocket with the open hasp hanging over the top of the pocket.



Taking a cue from Billy McComb's linking finger ring routine, set yourself up with a four or five generic duplicate rings. For example, a man's signet ring, a plain gold wedding band, a woman's diamond solitaire ring, and perhaps one or two more.

As your participant is testing the keys, look among your audience for a person wearing a ring similar to one of your duplicates. It needn't be identical because he will never have the opportunity to inspect it. Invite him to help you with your experiment in 'subconscious perception' by removing his ring.

As you pull the final key (the one which will open the lock) from your shirt pocket, show it for a split second to the person whose ring you will borrow saying, "Take a good look, it's important. That's enough." Then hand it to the first helper and say, "This key should open the lock - just in time."

At this point you should already have retrieved, from wherever you keep it, the matching duplicate ring. All eyes will be on the lock and key, so you can relax. You reach for the borrowed ring with your empty and apparently hand it to the person who just opened the lock. Actually you exchange his ring for your duplicate. Give helper #1 the duplicate ring and take back the keychain. Have him slip the ring onto the lock's hasp



before it is relocked. Do not have it dropped into the pail, yet.

While apparently replacing the keychain in your breast pocket (under cover of your coat), slip the borrowed ring onto the exposed hasp of the hidden padlock, remove it and lock the lock, dropping it into your armpit sleeve hole. The small clicking noise can be masked if your first helper has been instructed to shake the pail so the keys will be thoroughly mixed. Ask him gently to place the lock & ring in the pail and retain everything for just a moment.

Invite the second participant onto your platform. After he's been made to feel welcome, retrieve the pail from the first audience helper and, as you walk back to your onstage helper, perform the pail switch in order to hand him the lock with his ring on it. Dump all the keys into his cupped hands and ask, "Remember the key I showed you? You have one chance to find it." Finish as before.

# Topologo

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In this age of icons, the concept of using corporate logos is a natural. There is probably some elegant topological theory which explains the modus operandi, but frankly, I don't care – as long as it works. It's based on an original concept by Martin Gardner.

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"Advertisers spend billions of dollars to leave a favorable impression in your mind," begins the performer. "They want you to form a close association between their products and trademarks."

"It's no wonder then, that companies invest heavily in artwork and design to guarantee a strong impression. Here is a full page bearing nearly a hundred of these logos, as they are called, each graphically distinct from all the others. To demonstrate the potency of this advertising technique, we'll use only one of them."



The performer creases and folds a sheet of paper in half upon itself four times and then opens it fully. The fold lines divide the sheet into 16 cells, a 4 x 4 matrix.

"Size or placement should not influence your choice, so we'll cut this sheet into smaller sections and pick one at random. Let's fold the paper several times so we can cut all the layers at once. However," continues the Mentalist, "*you* should do the folding. Just stay on the creases. It doesn't matter in which order or direction you make the folds, so feel free to exercise your creativity." When the packet is completely folded it is  $\frac{1}{16}$  of its original size.

Taking a pair of heavy duty scissors to the packet, the performer trims away all four edges of the packet in one continuous cut, producing round-cornered squares and a cutaway portion in one single piece instead of a stack of shreds on the tabletop.

The pieces are dealt into two piles, those which are face up and the others which are printing side down. The performer says, "From among those squares whose printing we *cannot* see, select one piece at random. Take a look at the assortment of trademarks on that scrap. Select one, complete and uncut, whose product you can picture in your imagination. Focus your mind upon that product."

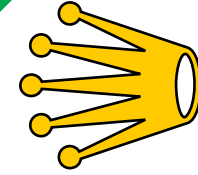
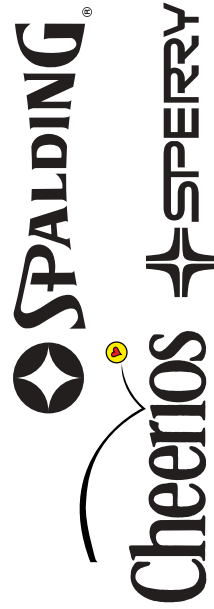
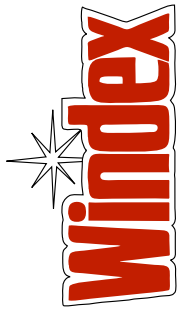
The performer takes a pad and ponders a moment, gazing into his helper's eyes, then draws a rough sketch. It is an illustration of the very item in the participant's mind!

Researching through collections of commercial trademarks has yielded 8 different logos which generate instant product recognition: Lifesavers candy, Cheerios, Dunkin' Donuts, Michelin Tires, Lender's Bagels, Froot Loops cereal, Spaghetti O's, and Compact Disc. Each product, when sketched, will produce the same drawing: a circle within a circle.

The artwork with this section bears a photocopy master for this presentation. It's a collection of logos in which the force designs occupy the center of 8 of the 16 segments which result when the paper is cut, regardless of how it's folded. The remaining logos are either 1) on the pieces which are not selected; 2) trademarks which are scissored in half because they lie across the fold lines, or; 3) unknown and generic companies.

As you thumb through to separate the pieces, make sure the force logos are face down. If not, turn the packet over. Dealing the non-force pieces face up on the table, displaying a variety of logos, reinforces the randomness of the selection.

Once your participant has the final piece in hand, sweep all the remaining pieces from the table and discard them.



L A Z B O Y

